



Speech of Hon. James M. Ashley, of Ohio

Delivered in the House of Representatives, January 17, 1861.

THE UNION OF THE STATES:

THE MAJORITY MUST GOVERN: IT IS TREASON TO SECEDE.

Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute!

MR. CHAIRMAN: For more than a quarter of a century, the citizens of the Free States of this Union, powerful in numbers, indomitable in energy, superior in wealth and culture, have submitted to the constitutionally expressed will of the people; and a few thousand slave-owners of the South, in the name of Democracy, have dictated and controlled the policy of the General Government. The constitutionally expressed will of the people is again declared, and the parties which have been defeated are called upon to assent to the adoption of the policy of the fathers in the inauguration of the just sway of freedom in the National Government. But a large majority of the leaders of one of the parties into which the South is divided, not only refuse obedience to the legally constituted authorities, but some four or five States, under the guidance of these party leaders, have gone so far as to declare their independence, and others are openly threatening rebellion, and the destruction of the Government they have so long controlled.

Standing, Mr. Chairman, upon the threshold of such events, events the most important in our history since the era of the Revolution, I feel the importance, the responsibility, and the grandeur of the mission committed by the verdict of a generous people to the party of which I am a member. And I desire for a short time the attention of the House, while discussing the exciting questions which it is alleged this verdict of the people has precipitated upon the country. Mr. Chairman, however much to be regretted, I am not insensible to the fact, that in a struggle to carry any important measure through this House, tactics are resorted to rather than argument, that votes are secured and changes are oftener effected by party machinery and Executive influences, than by appeals to the judgment and patriotism of members.

Nevertheless, I feel it to be my duty to speak and make known, so far as I may in the limited time allowed me, the views of those whom I have the honor to represent.

Mr. Chairman, Our present prosperity and happiness as a nation, no less than our future peace demands, in my judgment, the preservation of the American Union as our

fathers intended it should be, with no star withdrawn from the constellation; demands the maintenance of the National Constitution inviolate, and the faithful execution of all laws passed in pursuance of that Constitution, not only in every State but in every Territory within the limits of the Republic; demands an acquiescence in and support of the legally constituted authorities chosen by the people against any and all combinations of men who may attempt to subvert or destroy the Government, because they cannot longer control and dictate its policy.

Mr. Chairman, the people of the United States will ask, the nations of Europe will ask, what has been done in this country to justify revolution and the attempted destruction of the National Government? Where are the usurpations, the acts of oppression, which have been committed either by the Federal Government or any one or more of the Northern State governments against any of the Southern States, or the citizens of any Southern State, that will excuse, much less justify, revolution? Certainly there are no acts of the General Government, of which the Southern people may justly complain. The President says in his message, that during his term of office the laws have been faithfully executed, and in order that the Southern slave-owners may be doubly assured that he has been looking after and guarding their special interest, he declares that "*the fugitive slave law has been carried into execution in every contested case since the commencement of the present administration.*"

Senator Douglas, in his letter to the Merchants of New Orleans, on the 13th of November last says: "*I have yet to learn that the people of the South complain of the acts now on the statute book upon the subject of slavery, as applied to the States or Territories or the District of Columbia.*" Of no action of the National Government up to this date, either in refusing to pass such laws as the slave owners have demanded or executing them as they have ordered, can the South justly complain; because they have controlled until within a few days the Government, and filled all its offices with men who have done their bidding, even to conspiring with those who are attempting to overthrow the Government.

What, then, is the cause of this "crisis," as it is called?

I confess, Mr. Chairman, that I have seen no adequate cause for it, and therefore voted against the unusual course adopted by the House in referring that part of the President's Message treating of what is termed "*our domestic affairs*," to a special committee of thirty-three.

If there had been any serious alarm, whether with or without cause, among the great body of sober thinking men in the South; if they really believed that their rights were to be invaded because of Mr. Lincoln's election; I say if there were those who were really alarmed, I was unwilling to add to that alarm by adopting an unusual course in creating an extraordinary committee, and thus give aid and encouragement to the conspirators in stirring up political animosities, for the sole purpose of precipitating the country into a revolution, unless the North again surrendered as they had uniformly done before under such menaces, and on such terms as it might please the conspirators graciously to dictate. I believed that such a committee would not only do no good—as the sequel has proven—but that by creating it we would tacitly admit that there was some necessity for it. It appeared to me like pleading "*guilty*" to the indictment of the President, which I could not do, knowing it to be false. For these reasons I voted against raising this committee.

But I am told that we are in the midst of a "crisis," a "revolutionary crisis," and such a one as we have never before passed through; and I must yield to the minority, compromise away the rights of millions of freemen, or the Union is forever dismembered and destroyed. I admit, Mr. Chairman, that the conspirators have been able, with the aid and connivance of the traitors connected with the Government, to get up a formidable looking "crisis;" and I can assure you, sir, that had the people of this country known what has been going on here in this Capital for the past four years in nearly every department of the Government, there would have been such an expression by them at the ballot-boxes in condemnation of the party in power, as would not only have silenced the allies of southern disunionists from the North, but have nipped in the bud this "revolutionary crisis." But, Mr. Chairman, we have passed through several "crises" before. It appears to be a chronic disease in American politics. It must be conceded, however, that heretofore, in their desperate efforts to get up a "crisis," the conspirators have never set their stakes quite so high, nor permitted the treason to appear so undisguised. In 1820 and in 1832, in 1850, and again in 1854, we had "crises" not dissimilar to the present one; and they

were gotten up to order by the same class of men who have succeeded so well in getting up the present one. These are the same men who, with calculating coolness, disrupted the Charleston-Baltimore Conventions, and divided the party which, for nearly twenty-five years, they had implicitly governed. They did not hesitate openly to declare that they did so; because the friends of Mr. Douglas in the Free States would not yield to their imperious demands. I have no doubt, however, that a large majority of the southern men, in their conventions, never intended to go so far as they have since gone. They expected the friends of Mr. Douglas to surrender, as they now expect twenty-five millions of people to surrender to the demands of a few thousand men, who are asking new guarantees for slavery.

But revolutions seldom go backward; and this one is fast getting beyond the control of its authors. Undoubtedly, a large majority of these men only intended to play the old and oft-repeated game by which, heretofore, they had always been successful; which has been, first, to create a panic in all the Slave States, by the most unfounded statements and inflammatory appeals; and when the "crisis" had reached the culminating point, boldly threaten the disruption and destruction of the Government, unless new concessions were made by the North; and the concession they were to demand this time as a condition for remaining in the Union was not a new compromise that might be repealed, as they had repealed the old Missouri Compromise; but a so-called compromise that should, indeed, this time, be a "FINALITY," by making slavery constitutional and perpetual.

This play, however, Mr. Chairman, has had its run. The people of the Free States have seen behind the curtain, and begin to comprehend the manner in which these periodical crises are gotten up. They have not forgotten the manufactured crisis of 1850—nor forgiven the northern men who pretended that that sham was a reality. They have not forgotten that many of their faithless representatives surrendered the rights, and interest, and honor of the North, at the bidding of a few slave-masters. And why, Mr. Chairman, did these northern representatives then surrender? To save the Union, they answer. Southern men threatened then as now the dissolution of the Union and the destruction of the Government, unless their demands were complied with. And to save any trouble these accommodating Representatives, at the bidding of a few southern men, yielded.

Did that "FINALITY," as it was called, settle the question? Not at all. Hardly had these pretended northern patriots time to take a breathing spell, (in the retirement from

the cares of public life, which the people immediately permitted most of them to enjoy.) because it was broken up by the new and "final adjustment" of 1851. Upon what pretext was this demand for a compromise, that should be "final," made, in 1850? The pretext of equality in the Territories. The freemen of California—as they had the right to do—had made California a Free State.—This was a mortal offence to the slave interest; because, by this action of the miners of California the slave propagandist lost the golden prize upon which they had set their hearts, and for which they had involved this nation in an unconstitutional war. And because of the action of the free laboring men of California, in prohibiting slavery in that State, these men would not admit her into the Union, unless all the remaining territory, wrested from Mexico, should be given up to slavery.

Sir, when the impartial historian comes, to write the history of the compromise schemes of 1850, and the war made by the act of the Executive of this powerful Nation against the weak Republic of Mexico, for the sole purpose of extending the institution of slavery over the free and virgin soil of Utah, New Mexico and California—he will be compelled to class these acts as among the darkest crimes of which this Nation was ever guilty; and the compromisers from the Free States as morally guiltier than those who precipitated us into that unjust war.

When the old Whig party authoritatively endorsed, in their National Convention, these compromise measures, its death was inevitable. This old party, so formidable and manly, when the ally of freedom, immediately became weak, sickly and powerless when it became the ally of slavery, and died; died as the so-called Democratic party has just died, because also false to freedom, and as the Republican party will die, and as it ought to die, if it ever agrees to engraft into the Constitution a clause recognizing property in man. If it should do this thing, nothing can or ought to save it. Neither the talents of its most distinguished leaders, their prospective promotion, or the distribution of the patronage of the Federal Government. If all these combined could have saved any party, the Whig party could have been saved. But they could not. And as I now look back, over the long list of names which once made that party illustrious in the history of my country, I feel almost startled at the thought, that men so great, so venerated by the people of the United States, could, by the allurements and blandishments of the slave power, have been so far overcome as to betray the cherished principles of their lives, and the hopes of the people who entrusted them with power. But such was the fate of most of the leaders of the organiza-

tion of which I am speaking. One after another deserted until, at last, the eyes of the Nation were fixed upon one whose unsurpassed ability and great name had, in almost every crisis through which the country had passed, been the hope and reliance of the liberty-loving masses. And when, alas! he too fell, a black pall, as of midnight darkness, spread over the political horizon, and many earnest and true men gave up in despair.

It may be, sir, that with others, I have placed too great an estimate upon this extraordinary man, who has done so much as a statesman and orator to give our country fame and position among the nations of the earth, who has done so much for freedom and so much, alas! for slavery, whose fall will ever be regretted by the good and great, and whose last fatal step should be a perpetual warning to all who shall come after him. Sir, it would seem as if by the rock-beaten shore of his own beloved Massachusetts, in whose bosom he is laid down to rest, there must come up forever from old ocean a sorrowing response to the sad hearts of the people of Massachusetts for his fall. Vanity of vanities, all is vanity saith the preacher. The weakness and nothingness of human greatness never in all the history of the past shone out more conspicuously than when this great light went out, overshadowed as it was by the dark cloud of slavery. From the hour he abandoned the principles of freedom and the will of the people of Massachusetts, he felt that he was dying, and he hurriedly bade adieu to this Capital, to the scenes of his wonderful triumphs and former glory, and to the dying organization which had been at once his life and his death, and passing away with it, both were entombed together, and there the party and he who was its brightest ornament and most distinguished leader will ever remain—the party to be remembered in history only for its greatness and folly; its timidity and its wrongs. Its greatness, in that it had as its leaders the brightest intellects of the land and in its ranks the mass of intelligence. Its folly, in that it subordinated human rights to a financial policy calculated to benefit the few, rather than guard the interest of the many. Its timidity, in that it never could lead, but was ever on the defensive, pleading for ease and quiet. In its wrongs, in that it gave the sanction of its organization to the most offensive demands of the slave power when it indorsed the fatal compromise of 1850.

Mr. Chairman. There was no more necessity for the political excitement which preceded the so-called compromises of 1850 than there is to-day for President Buchanan to inflict upon this House and country another message on southern rights and southern wrongs. That panic was all manufac-

tured, coolly and deliberately manufactured, just as the owner of a steam mill would get up steam by putting fire under the boiler.

Just so with this "crisis" to a great extent. Three-fourths of it is the baldest pretense. There are only a few leading men who at heart favor it, and those who do have put a ball in motion which, unless soon checked they will be unable to control or even direct, and, like the authors of the French revolution, they will, in all human probability, be among its first victims.

Already the sober thinking men of the South are trembling, not only for their own personal safety and that of their families, but for fear of a despotism which they cannot tolerate, and a taxation which will eat out all their substance. Already we get glimpses of what may be expected in the future, especially if war should ensue. Forced contributions must be levied; the citizens will be assessed and told they must take so much of the revolutionary stock. If they refuse, they will be classed among the disaffected, then denounced as abolitionists in disguise, and subjected to the mercy of a maddened mob. A tax of from *fifteen to twenty-five dollars* per head annually for each slave, and other property in proportion, will soon cool the mad enthusiasm of the thoughtless.

How many men are there in South Carolina over twenty-one years of age? Not more than fifty-five thousand. Of this number less than ten thousand are planters—and not more than twelve thousand in addition own their homesteads. Almost two-thirds of the entire white population are tenants at will of the planters. They are very poor, ignorant, and destitute, and according to Senator Hammond, "obtain a precarious subsistence by occasional jobs, by hunting, by fishing, by plundering fields and folds, and too often by what is in its effects far worse—trading with slaves, and seducing them to plunder for their benefit."

With less than twenty-five thousand men who have any property to be taxed, South Carolina proposed to make war on the United States. Has the world ever witnessed such stupendous folly and madness.

From seven to ten millions of dollars annually will be necessary if she is involved in war, to maintain her government and army. Where is this vast sum of money to come from? From the other Slave States, it may be answered, but the other Slave States will be in no better condition than South Carolina, even if they should unite. The proportionate cost of maintaining one or ten governments, one or ten armies, would be about the same.

Mr. Boyce, late a Member of this House, answered these questions, a few years ago, in an address to the people of South Carolina, as follows:

"South Carolina cannot become a nation. God makes nations—not man. You cannot extemporize a nation out of South Carolina. It is simply impossible; we have not the resources. We could exist by tolerance; and what that tolerance would be, when we consider the present hostile spirit of the age to the institution of slavery, all may readily imagine. I trust we may never have to look upon the painful and humiliating spectacle. From the weakness of our national government a feeling of insecurity would arise, and capital would take the alarm and leave us. But it may be said, 'Let capital go!' To this I reply, that capital is the life-blood of a modern community; and, in losing it, you loose the vitality of the State.

"Secession—separate nationality, with all its burdens—is no remedy. It is no redress for the past, it is no security for the future. It is only a magnificent sacrifice of the present, without in anywise gaining in the future. Such is the intensity of my conviction on the subject, that if secession should take place—of which I have no idea, for I cannot believe in such STUPENDOUS MADNESS—I shall consider the institution of slavery as doomed, and that the great God, in our blindness, has made us the instrument of its destruction."

What Mr. Boyce then said, is as true today as when he uttered it. South Carolina cannot long maintain her present position. With her commerce destroyed by blockade, as it will be in case of war, all her available men in the army, an immense police force, at great cost, to watch and prevent if they can, an outbreak among the slaves, every branch of business prostrated, and her cotton and rice fields turned into desolate wastes. No people will long submit to such an intolerable condition. Already men of means are moving or sending their families North. It is a step dictated by prudence. I should certainly do so were I a resident of the South, and one of her largest slave owners. I would have no fears that my family would be either mobbed, or insulted, or ordered out of the country by some self-constituted vigilance committee, or that my property would be destroyed or stolen and distributed among the rabble, because I happened to be a resident of a Southern State. No judicious man who is able, will hazard the risk, at such a time, of having his wife and family violated and massacred by the slaves, in case of a servile insurrection. The madness of the leaders in this attempted revolution, is driving and will drive thousands of families, and millions of wealth into the North. The bluster of 1832 drove some citizens of South Carolina, whom I know, into Ohio, and I doubt not there were others who settled in nearly all the Free States.

When the leading conspirators come to put their hands into the pockets of the people, to take their last dollar, they will rebel. If the citizens of South Carolina, and of the Southern States, were oppressed by the National Government with burdens that honorable and patriotic men could not bear, then I grant you they would, as would every brave people, sacrifice life and property without stint, if there was any hope of bettering their condition. They have not, however, and cannot point the people to a list of intolerable grievances, such as will justify their attempted revolution. The address issued to the southern people, which was prepared by

order of the South Carolina convention, declares, that "While constituting a portion of the United States, it has been the statesmanship of the South, which has guided the nation in its mighty strides to power and expansion. In the field, as in the Cabinet, it is they who have led it to its renown and grandeur." For seventy-three years then, on her own showing, southern statesmen have controlled and given direction to the National Government, under which their section has grown from a million and a half to eight millions, without including the slaves, and has advanced in prosperity and wealth, as no people ever did before. Is there then, taking her own statement as true, any justification for the course South Carolina, and other Southern States are attempting, and which nearly all are threatening?

No wrong or unconstitutional act has been committed or is proposed to be committed by the General Government. Is the mere election [by the people, of a President who does not favor the cherished policy of a few thousand slave-holders, sufficient cause for destroying the Union, and involving the nation in civil war? I need not answer this question, there can be and there will be but one response by the patriotic men of all parties. The judgments of all thinking impartial men in the entire nation, and in the civilized world, will condemn the leaders who without cause, are attempting the dissolution of this Union, and the destruction of the best form of government ever devised by man. To this crime is added that of duplicity. During the late campaign every Presidential candidate for whom the South or North voted, distinctly denied that they were in favor of disunion, but on the contrary, they all professed the most unqualified devotion to the Union.

The people of the United States then voted, but little over two months ago, unanimously in favor of maintaining the Union. Why then should it be destroyed now? What has been done since to justify such a gigantic crime? Can any one give a satisfactory answer? Men who have brought about the present excitement may attempt to satisfy themselves, but they cannot justify their conduct to an intelligent people.

But we are told, Mr. Chairman, that unless we vote for such new guarantees to slavery as the South shall demand, that all the Southern States are going out of the Union. It is said that they intend to do this with the confident expectation of obtaining concession from the North which they could not obtain in the Union. That they expect to do this by a reconstruction of the Federal Union on such terms as they shall dictate. In this mad scheme they have the sympathy, encouragement and promise of aid from men in the Free States, calling themselves democrats,

The basis of the new Union is to be the recognition of slaves as property by constitutional provision, unalterable except with the consent of every Slave State. And this is called democracy in the year of grace, 1861. Democracy in the days of Jefferson, was for free States and free Territories. Madison "*would not admit into the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.*" To-day the doctrine that slavery is right and must be made perpetual, is the test of what is called democracy.

That such demands will ever be acceded to by the people of the United States, I do not believe possible. But whatever may be the course of others, be the consequences what they may, by no act or vote of mine shall the Constitution of my country ever be so amended as to recognize property in man.

Mr. Chairman, ours is a complex system of government uniting two governments within the same territorial jurisdiction. The State governments being confined within their own boundaries, the National Government extending over all States and Territories, and on the high seas. Every loyal citizen is subject to both these governments, and can in no way withdraw his allegiance from either, except by ceasing to be a citizen of the United States. If he is a citizen of the United States he is also a citizen of the State where he resides, and he cannot be a citizen of any State, and be released by any action of said State from his allegiance to the National Government.

Both these governments, the State and Federal, derive all the power they possess directly from the people. The Government of the United States is supreme to the extent of the powers clearly delegated to it in the National Constitution. The State governments are supreme within their limits, except in the exercise of power reserved by the people or prohibited to them by the Constitution of the United States.

There can be no misunderstanding as to what the reserved powers are which are prohibited to the States. Article first, Section ten, of the Federal Constitution declares that

"No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, or *ex post facto* law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts, or grant any title of nobilities."

Clause 2. "No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any imposts on duties, on imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws; and the net produce of all duties and imposts, laid by any State on imports or exports, shall be for the use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such laws shall be subject to the revision and control of Congress."

Clause 3. "No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay a duty on tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay."

These powers prohibited to the States were conferred by the supreme Constitution on the General Government. The highest attributes of sovereignty are thus secured by this Constitution. Congress alone has power to make war and make peace, to conclude treaties and to regulate commerce with the nations abroad and with the States of the Union at home. Congress alone possesses the exclusive power to keep an Army and Navy, to lay and collect duties on imports, coin money and regulate its value, and to crown all, it is declared

—“that this Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.”

There is then, no necessity for a conflict of jurisdiction between the General and State governments. To the extent of the powers conferred by the Constitution on Congress, it was intended that the general government should act directly upon the citizens of all the States and Territories and execute its own laws and decrees by its own officers. To the States are secured the regulation of their own municipal affairs with which Congress can in no way constitutionally interfere.

The powers and duties of both governments are clearly defined, and neither may of right interfere with or attempt to exercise the functions of the other. Where the citizens and officers of these governments discharge their duties properly, there can be no collision. These systems of government are, in my opinion, the best ever devised by man. The history of this nation, for the past seventy-three years, is the best evidence of its practicability. They have and ever will work harmoniously, if honestly administered. The people residing in the thirteen Colonies created this National Government by making and adopting our present Constitution. They did not make it and ratify it as nations make and ratify treaties. They did not make it for a temporary purpose, but to secure a “*perpetual union*.” It was made by the action and with the approval of the whole people residing in all the colonies, and was not made by the citizens of Independent Sovereignities, as the secessionists claim. Neither before nor after the Declaration of our National Independence were any one of the old thirteen Colonies free and Independent States or Nations; but they were colonies of Great Britain, then they were colonies united as one government, under the Articles of Confederation, in rebellion against Great Britain, calling themselves the “United States of America.” The war of our Independence was fought and our liberty secured by the Confederation, and not by single col-

onies. Their joint independence was acknowledged by Great Britain and the nations of Europe, and never as separate Sovereign Independent States. The several States are not even mentioned by name in any one of these treaties, so far as I have examined. Our fathers intended, in every possible manner, to impress upon the American mind the maxim, that our freedom and independence was secured by our union; and that, without this union, we could not maintain our liberty and independence.

From all the patriotic men of the Revolution there comes to us the warning, to beware of the dangers of a dissolution of the Union. In a letter, of the date of October 10th, 1787, addressed by Randolph to the Speaker of the House of Delegates of Virginia, he said:

“Severe experience under the pressure of war, a ruinous weakness manifested since the return of peace, and the contemplation of those dangers which darken the future prospect, have condemned the hope of grandeur and of safety under the auspices of the Confederation. * * Among the upright and intelligent, few can read without emotion the future fate of the States if severed from each other. Then shall we learn the full weight of foreign intrigue. Then shall we hear of partitions of the country. * * But dreadful as the total dissolution of the Union is to my mind, I entertain no less horror at the thought of partial confederacies. In short, sir, I am fatigued with summoning up to my imagination the miseries which will harass the United States, if torn from each other, and which will not end until they are superseded by fresh mischiefs, under the yoke of a tyrant.”

To the same effect are the declarations of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and many others, whose opinions might be quoted, did time permit.

At no period in our history, either before or since the Revolution, has any one of the States been a separate sovereign independent nation, with the recognized power to make war and conclude treaties, or form of dissolve alliances with any nation. The principle of national unity is the very life and soul of our Constitution. Without it, our great national charter is not worth the paper upon which it was written.

In a letter, addressed by the unanimous vote of the Convention which framed the Constitution, to “his excellency the President of Congress,” it is declared that—

—“it is obviously impracticable in the Federal Government of these States to secure all rights of independent sovereignty to each, and yet provide for the interests and safety of all. * * In all our deliberations on this subject, we kept steadily in our view that which appears to us the *greatest interest* of every true American, the *consolidation of our Union*, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence.”—[*Elliot's Debates*, vol. 1, p. 24.]

The thirteen Colonies, as I have before said, were united under the Confederation at the time the present Constitution was adopted, and the old Continental Congress representing the people in all the States initiated the movements for the new government, by calling together the convention of delegates which made this Constitution, declaring by resolutions when they did so, that

the convention was called "for the sole and only purpose of making the Federal Government adequate to the exigencies of government, and the preservation of the Union." And this constitutional convention, when submitting their joint labors to the judgment of their constituents, declared in the preamble to the Constitution, that, "We the people of the United States, in ORDER TO FORM A MORE PERFECT UNION, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America."

"Can it be conceived," says General Jackson,

—"that an instrument made for the purpose of forming a more perfect Union? than that of the Confederation could be so constructed by the assembled wisdom of our country as to substitute for that confederation a form of government dependent for its existence on the local interest, the party spirit of a State or of a prevailing faction in a State?"

Mr. Patterson, of New Jersey, a distinguished member of the convention which framed the Constitution, declared "that no State under the Confederation had a right to withdraw from the Union without the consent of all." "The confederation," he says,

—"is in the nature of a compact, and can any State, unless by the consent of the whole, either in politics or law, withdraw their powers. Let it be said by Pennsylvania and the other large States that they, for the sake of peace, assented to the Confederation: can she now resume her original right without the consent of the donee?"

This modern doctrine of the right of a State to withdraw from the Union at pleasure, is a "heresy" which was denounced by all the leading men of the Revolution. If one State can withdraw from the Union at pleasure, may not a majority of the States, with the same propriety exclude one or more States from the Union? Certainly they can. But there is no such right under the Constitution,³ and the framers of the Constitution carefully guarded against any such absurd theory.

"It is only," says Judge Story,

"in the event of a failure of every constitutional resort, and an accumulation of usurpations and abuses rendering passive obedience and non-resistance a greater evil than resistance and revolution; that even Madison claims for a single member of the Union 'a right, as an *extra* and *ultra* constitutional right, to make the appeal from the cancelled obligations of the constitutional compact to original rights and the laws of self-preservation.'"—[*Story on Con. 2:20.*]

Chief Justice Marshall, in the case of *Cohens vs. Virginia*, (5 Wheaton, p. 92,) said,

"The people made the Constitution, and the people can unmake it. It is the creature of their will, and lives only by their will. But this supreme irresistible power to make and unmake resides only in the whole body of the people; not in any subdivision of them. The attempt of any of the parts to exercise it is usurpation, and ought to be repelled by those to whom the people have delegated this power of repelling it. The acknowledged inability of the government, then, to sustain itself against the public will, and, by force or otherwise, to control the whole nation, is no sound argument in support of its constitutional inability to preserve itself against a section of THE NATION acting in opposition to the general will."

Nowhere did the framers of the Constitution provide for the dissolution of the Union. Neither did the people, in any one of the Colonies, when adopting the Constitution, reserve to themselves the right to withdraw from the Union at pleasure, and thus destroy the Government they were organizing and the Union it created. The citizens in two or three of the colonies, it is true, before ratifying the Constitution, did discuss the propriety of reserving the right to withdraw from the Union at pleasure, but no such right was conceded; and from the necessity of the case, could not be admitted then, any more than it can be now.

Alexander Hamilton, in a letter to James Madison, suggested the propriety of New York ratifying the Constitution with "the reservation of a right to secede," if certain amendments to the Constitution, proposed by New York, were not adopted within a given period. Mr. Madison replied, declaring explicitly, that the Constitution required an "adoption *in toto* and forever." It has, he adds, "been so adopted by the other States."—But I will read the whole paragraph:

"My opinion is, that a reservation of a right to withdraw, if amendments be not decided on under the form of the Constitution, within a certain time, is a conditional ratification, that it does not make New York a member of the new Union, and consequently she should not be received on that plan. Compacts must be reciprocal: this principle in such case would not be preserved. The Constitution requires an adoption *in toto* and FOREVER. It has been so adopted by the other States. An adoption for a limited time would be as defective as an adoption of some of the articles only. In short, any condition whatever must vitiate the ratification." The idea of reserving the right to withdraw was stated at Richmond and considered as a conditional ratification, which was itself abandoned—worse than a rejection.

At a later day, (1830,) Mr. Madison declared, in a letter to Hon. Edward Everett, that—

"It [the Constitution] was formed not by the governments of the component States, as the Federal Government for which it was substituted was formed; nor was it formed by a majority of the people of the United States, as a single community, in the manner of a consolidated government. It was formed by the States—that is, by the people in each of the States, acting in their highest sovereign capacity, and formed consequently by the same authority which formed the State constitutions.

"Being thus derived from the same source as the constitutions of the States, it has within each State the same authority as the constitution of the State, and is as much a constitution, in the strict sense of the term, within its prescribed sphere, as the constitutions of the States are in their respective spheres, but with this obvious and essential difference, that being a compact among States in their highest sovereign capacity, and constituting the people thereof one people for certain purposes, it can not be altered or annulled at the will of the States individually, as the constitution of a State may be at its individual will."

Thus spoke Madison, the father of the Constitution.

I now make a quotation from Jefferson. In a letter written more than forty-five years ago, he said—

"In every free and deliberating society, there must, from the nature of man, be opposite parties and violent dissensions and discords: and one of these, for the most part, must prevail over the others for a longer or shorter time. Perhaps this party division is necessary to induce each to watch and relate to the people the proceedings of the other. But if, on a temporary superiority of the one

party, the other is to resort to a secession of the Union, no Federal government can ever exist. If to rid ourselves of the present rule of Massachusetts and Connecticut we break the Union, will the evil stop there? Suppose the New England States alone cut off, will our natures be changed? Are we not men still to the South of that, and with all the passions of men? Immediately we shall see a Virginia and a Pennsylvania party arise in the residuary confederacy, and the public mind will be distracted by the same party spirit. What a game, too, will one party have in their hands, by eternally threatening the other, that unless they do so and so they will join their northern neighbors. If we reduce our Union to Virginia and North Carolina, immediately the conflict will be established between the representatives of these two States, and they will end by breaking into their simple units.

These and similar opinions of the leading men who put the machinery of our Government in motion, might be quoted, if time permitted, almost indefinitely. In fact the whole history of the times proves that the men who made the Constitution and favored its ratification, intended to make a Government for the people in all the States which should be strong enough to withstand all attacks, and which could not be broken up or divided, except by the consent of the whole people.

Mr. Chairman. Article fourth section fourth of the Constitution declares that the "United States shall guarantee to every State in the Union a republican form of government." This includes, of course, all the States in the Union when the Constitution was adopted, and all new States which should afterwards be admitted into the Union. These words are not susceptible of double interpretation. They can have but one meaning. They declare imperatively that the executive, legislative, and judicial powers of the Government, acting under and by authority of the national Constitution, shall see that every State in the Union has secured to it a republican form of government. This provision of itself is a clear denial of the claim set up here that every State is sovereign and independent, and that the Federal Government is only a confederation clothed by these sovereign and independent States with temporary authority which can be withdrawn at the pleasure, caprice, or whim of an accidental or absolute majority of the citizens of any State. General Jackson declared in his celebrated proclamation "that to say that any State may at pleasure secede from the Union, is to say that the United States are not a nation."

This claim of the right of any State to withdraw from the Union at pleasure, is so absurd that it would seem unworthy of serious consideration, were it not for the fact that the doctrine is daily proclaimed here, with some show of seriousness, and, I regret to say, by some northern men.

Mr. Chairman, the people of the United States in creating this National Government, intended to protect themselves from every form of despotism. They intended to secure themselves against the action of State gov-

ernments, which in an excitement like the present might attempt to establish a despotic government, abolish liberty, and violate the guaranteed rights of any portion of their citizens. And in order thus to secure themselves, they provided in the National Constitution for a redress of their grievances by appealing from the unconstitutional action of such a State to the whole people in all the States represented in one government. The National Government, by this mandatory clause, becomes the protector of the whole people in all the States against the violation of their personal rights and liberties, even though committed by legislative majorities; and the General Government is clothed with all necessary power and authority to preserve inviolate the guarantees secured to all citizens by the Federal Constitution. This was a wise and salutary provision, enabling an oppressed minority in any locality to secure the assistance and protection of the whole people against every form of despotism.

As a nation, the law of self-preservation demands that we permit no State or combination of States to break up and destroy this Government, and establish upon our borders anti-democratic, monarchical or military despotisms. As a government, we can no more allow this to be done, than a State can allow one or more counties within its jurisdiction to dissolve their connexion at pleasure with the State government, and establish a government hostile to the State. The fact that the citizens of these counties might vote unanimously for secession, would not justify the citizens in the remaining counties of the State in permitting the State thus to be dismembered, any more than the Government of the United States could permit a State to be withdrawn, even though the citizens of the seceding State should vote unanimously in favor of the proposition. Neither could we permit States in the Union to change their governments, and adopt governments anti-republican in form, much less to establish monarchical or military despotisms in violation of the fundamental provisions of the National Constitution.

Chief Justice Taney, in the case of *Luther vs. Borden, et. al.*, 5th Howard, page 45, a case growing out of the Dorr rebellion in Rhode Island, and to which I may again allude, declared that:

"Unquestionably, a military government, established as the permanent government of a State, would not be a republican government, and it would be the duty of Congress to overthrow it."

If it be the duty of Congress, as Chief Justice Taney declares, and as I believe, to overthrow a military government, established by the legal authorities of any State, it cannot be denied that it is also the duty of Congress to overthrow and abolish any form of government in a State which is in fact anti-

republican and oppressive, no matter whether established by the legally constituted authorities, or by usurpation. The power of the Federal Government to prohibit any State from establishing an anti-republican form of government, is as clear and unquestioned as is its authority to prohibit any State from setting the National Constitution at defiance and assuming the power of an independent nation.

The mode and manner of procedure, in either case, is committed entirely to the discretion of Congress, as provided in Section eighth, Clause eighteen of the Constitution, which authorizes Congress "*To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper to carry into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States or in any department or officer thereof.*"

In the Rhode Island case to which I have alluded, there was, I believe, an admitted majority, of the people of the State, who desired to change from the Charter Government of Charles the Second, granted in 1663, under which the State had always acted, to a Constitutional Government which should extend the right of suffrage, and fairly adjust the inequality in the apportionment of representatives in the State Legislature. The Charter pointed out no mode of procedure by which amendments could be made, and the Charter party, by the unfair apportionment and the property qualification for electors, were able to keep possession of the Government, and on a pretence of want of power to propose any amendments to the Charter, they repeatedly refused to initiate proceedings on application of the people for a change of the organic law from the old Monarchical Charter to a Republican Constitution.

The people failing to obtain a redress of their grievances from the recognized authorities, proceeded to secure them in a revolutionary manner. They formed associations, held public meetings, prescribed rules for the election of a convention of delegates to form a State constitution; in accordance with which delegates were elected throughout the State, who met, framed an excellent constitution and submitted it to the people for adoption or rejection. A vote was taken upon it at the time and in the manner prescribed by the convention, and it was adopted and ratified by a large majority of the people. Elections were subsequently held in accordance with the provisions of this constitution, and Thomas W. Dorr was duly elected governor, together with a legislature and all State officers provided for in the constitution. This legislature convened and organized; Dorr was inaugurated governor, and attempted to take possession of the arsenals and public property of the State. The

charter government resisted the people's government, proclaimed martial law by act of their legislature, and called on the President of the United States for military aid to assist in putting down the rebellion. As soon as Dorr and his party learned that the President had decided to assist the charter government, he fled from the State, and thus ended the so-called Dorr rebellion and with it their government. Of course I need hardly add what all know so well, that Dorr was subsequently tried for treason, convicted, and sent to the penitentiary for life. I do not speak of the justice or injustice of the charter government, I only speak of the fact. I have been thus minute in this matter to show that if an admitted minority of the citizens of any State may thus have the assistance of the Federal Government against an admitted majority who were seeking in a peaceful, and as they supposed the only manner in which they could proceed to secure their own rights, without inflicting or intending to inflict injury or wrong on the minority, or establish a government hostile to the United States, how much more important that a minority of the citizens of any State, who are loyal to the Union, shall be protected in their constitutional rights, even though a large majority, through the forms of law, attempt to destroy their liberties, make war upon the National Government, and establish a despotic instead of a Republican form of government.

Mr. Chairman, I have introduced the subject matter of the Rhode Island controversy here, for the double purpose of showing the power conferred on the Federal Government by the National Constitution, and the duty of the Government in contingencies that now seem likely to happen. Suppose *five or ten*, or even all of the Slave States should, with the sanction of a majority of their citizens, and under the forms of law enacted by their present recognized authorities, join South Carolina in her treasonable movements. What would be the duty of the General Government towards the patriotic and loyal minority in these States? Undoubtedly there can be but one answer to this question. It is their duty to protect and secure them in the enjoyment of all their constitutional rights, and by force if necessary. And though the loyal citizens should be largely in the minority, if they remain faithful to the Constitution and the Union, they may and should disregard the action and usurpations of a majority, refuse to recognize their treasonable proceedings, either in declaring the States sovereign and independent, changing the State constitutions, or by acts of their conventions absolving all citizens from their allegiance to the National Government. Those who remain loyal and refuse to recognize such revolutionary proceedings, may continue to act

under the old constitution and laws of the State, as if no such treasonable action had taken place, elect their governor, State officers, and Members of the Legislature and Congress, at the time and in the manner prescribed by the laws existing prior to the usurpation.

The Governors thus elected could call upon the President of the United States for aid to suppress the rebellion, and it would be his duty to grant it. There is no doubt but what Congress would recognize such a government. The legislature thus elected could choose United States Senators to fill any vacancies that might exist either from the expiration of the terms of the present Senators, their resignation or expulsion, because engaged in a conspiracy to overthrow the present National Government. The Senators and Representatives in Congress thus elected by the loyal citizens of any of the seceding States would undoubtedly be admitted to seats, each House, by the Constitution, being the sole judge of the qualifications of its own members. In this manner the National Government could fulfill and discharge its constitutional obligations by securing to each State a republican form of government, suppress rebellion, and protect the lives, liberties and property of the loyal citizens. If it be said, however, that the majority would vote down the minority, or by force and mob law prevent such an expression of their opinions at the ballot-box, or the revolutionists might elect a Governor and Legislature, members of Congress and Senators, with the understanding that they should not serve, and that such a scheme as is proposed for the minority to act upon is impracticable; then, I answer, that the duty of all loyal citizens would be to assemble and petition Congress for a redress of their grievances—the protection of their lives and property, and the security of all their constitutional rights, including a republican form of State government.

The National Government justly and proudly boasts of having protected one poor and friendless foreigner, who had only declared his intention to become an American citizen from the despotism of Austria, at the hazard of a bloody and expensive war. If, then, there be but one of its own citizens, born and bred on its own soil, who, despite the threatened punishment of traitors in rebellion against the United States, remains loyal to the Constitution and Union, shall he not be protected in his life, liberty, and property by the National Government? If the General Government have not power to protect the rights of all loyal citizens, then the government is a failure and that provision of the National Constitution, which says: "*The United States shall guarantee to every State in the Union a republican form of govern-*

ment." is a dead letter, and worse than useless. But, Mr. Chairman, with a proper administration of the National Government it will neither be a dead letter nor useless, and the future history of this Government will prove how wisely, and with what sagacity and forethought our fathers acted when they inserted this invaluable provision in the Constitution, requiring the whole people to aid in suppressing rebellion, and securing the rights of all who either by numbers or military usurpation might be overpowered in any particular State or States.

Mr. Chairman, all governments must, from the very nature of the case, use force to execute their Executive, Legislative, and Judicial decrees, if resisted. This is a power inseparable from all governments. If the city of New York, to-day, by the unanimous voice of her citizens, were to declare herself a sovereign and independent city, and set up a government of her own, put the authority of the Federal and State Governments at defiance, and collect and appropriate all the revenue derived from duties on imports, thus cutting off more than half the entire revenue of the National Government, does any sane man suppose for a moment that this Government would tolerate it? By no means. If it became necessary to subdue her, the Government would lay the entire city in ruins. Martial law would be declared, a blockade proclaimed—the property of all rebels confiscated, and the leading traitors hanged or shot. The city of New York contains nearly a million of inhabitants, almost, if not quite, four times the number of whites in South Carolina, and, I believe, more wealth than any one Southern State, unless it be Virginia. The people living in the city of New York have just the same right to declare themselves out of the Union that the people of any one or more of the Southern States have—no more, no less. And that right is the inherent right of revolution. The Government once involved in war, in its efforts to enforce the laws and put down rebellion, could know no rule but success. A blockade, martial law, the confiscation of all property, real and personal, of the insurgents, the execution of all the leading rebels and the removal, by force if necessary, of the cause that produced the rebellion.

This is no new doctrine. John Quincy Adams, nearly twenty years ago, in the House of Representatives, in speaking of the war power, said:

"When your country is actually in war, whether it be a war of invasion or a war of insurrection, Congress has power to carry on the war, and must carry it on according to the laws of war; and by the laws of war an invaded country has all its laws and municipal institutions swept by the board, and martial law takes the place of them. This power in Congress has, perhaps, never been called into exercise under the present Constitution of the United States. But, when the laws of war are in force, what, I ask, is one of those laws? It is this: that when a coun-

try is invaded and two hostile armies are set in martial array, the commanders of both armies have power to emancipate all the slaves in the invaded territory."

This course is generally indispensable with the insurgents, in all revolutions, in order to "obtain indemnity for the past, and security for the future." The Constitution makes the President of the United States the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy, and he is required to see that the laws are faithfully executed. He cannot evade this just responsibility, if he would, unless he is a traitor. There is, then, but one course left after all peaceful remedies fail, and that is, to use all the power of the Government to crush rebellion and treason, if we would preserve the nation from certain and utter ruin.

As to the powers and duties of the Government, in case of rebellion, I quote and endorse in full the declarations of Henry Clay, made in a letter to Hon. Daniel Ullman and others, of New York, dated October 3d, 1850. In speaking of secession, he said:

"Suppose the standard should be raised of open resistance to the Union, the Constitution, and laws, what is to be done? There can be but one possible answer. The power, the authority, and the dignity of the government ought to be maintained, and resistance put down at all hazard. The duty of executing the laws and suppressing insurrections is without limitation or qualification; it is co-extensive with the jurisdiction of the United States. No human government can exist without the power of applying force, and the actual application of it in extreme cases. My belief is, that if it should be applied to South Carolina, in the event of her secession, she would be speedily reduced to obedience, and the Union, instead of being weakened, would acquire additional strength."

And in a speech delivered in the United States Senate in 1850, he said:

"Now, Mr. President, I stand here in my place, meaning to be unawed by any threats, whether they come from individuals or from States. I should deplore as much as any man, living or dead, that arms should be raised against the authority of the Union, either by individuals or by States. But, after all that has occurred, if any one State, or a portion of the people of any one State, choose to place themselves in military array against the government of the Union. *I am for trying the strength of the government.* I am for ascertaining whether we have a government or not—practical, efficient, capable of maintaining its authority, and of upholding the powers and interests which belong to a government. Nor sir, am I to be alarmed or dissuaded from any such course by intimations of the spilling of blood. *If blood is to be spilt, by whose fault is it?* Upon the supposition, I maintain it will be the fault of those who choose to raise the standard of disunion, and endeavor to prostrate this government; and, sir, when that is done, so long as it pleases God to give me a voice to express my sentiments, or an arm, weak and enfeebled as it may be by age, that voice and that arm will be on the side of my country for the support of the general authority, and for maintenance of the powers of this Union."

Again, in reply to some remarks of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. Barnwell), Mr. Clay said:

"Mr. President, I said nothing with respect to the character of Mr. Rhett, (for I might as well name him.) I know him personally, and have some respect for him; but if he pronounced the sentiment attributed to him, of raising the standard of disunion and of resistance to the common government, whatever he has been, if he follows up that declaration by corresponding overt acts, he is a TRAITOR, and I hope will meet with the fate of a TRAITOR!" [Great applause in the galleries.]

Of South Carolina, he said:

"I will tell her, and I will tell the Senator himself, that there are as brave, as dauntless, as gallant men, and as devoted patriots, in my opinion, in every other State in the Union, as are to be found in South Carolina herself; and, if in any unjust cause South Carolina, or any other State, should hoist the flag of disunion and rebellion, thousands, tens of thousands, of Kentuckians would flock to the standard of their country to dissipate and repress their rebellion. These are my sentiments—make the most of them."—[*App. Cong. Globe, 1 sess. 3d Cong. p. 1414.*]

Our first duty, then, it seems to me, Mr. Chairman, is to abolish all ports of entry which it may be inconvenient to occupy; to proclaim a blockade of all ports in the rebellious States; employ the navy in connexion with privateers, who shall be authorized to capture and hold as prizes all vessels with their cargoes leaving any port without a clearance from an officer duly commissioned by the authorities of the United States, as also all vessels which might attempt to enter any of said ports without paying the duties to an officer of the General Government. A blockade, such as I speak of, would be one of the most effective methods, without firing a gun, of opening the eyes of the thoughtless and reckless men in the South to the true condition into which they have so madly precipitated themselves.

Their commerce, which consist almost entirely of exports, would be utterly destroyed, so far as finding outlets through the present channels of trade. And they would be forced to find outlets, for they must export to live—and they would be compelled to ship their cotton, rice, tobacco, &c., by way of New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, but principally by way of Baltimore—which latter city would reap a harvest and enjoy a trade and prosperity which she has never known, furnishing, as she would be compelled to do, shipping and exchange for three-fourths of the immense commerce that would thus be forced through her gates, but which now finds outlets through other channels.

This will be a matter at which it will be well enough for business men to look in the cities named, especially in Baltimore, if the National Government unfortunately should be driven to the necessity of adopting the course I have indicated—a course which I trust and pray may never be necessary—but which, when necessary, I shall insist on being adopted.

Mr. Chairman. The President of the United States, in his late annual message, charges upon the northern people, and this charge is made the ground of complaint by representatives from States now threatening rebellion, that the free States of the Union are faithless to their constitutional obligations; that they obstruct and resist the execution of constitutional laws enacted by Congress, in which the southern States are deeply interested.

Sir, this unfounded and slanderous charge of the President has done much to inflame the public mind in the South, and I meet it right here, and most positively and unqualifiedly deny it. Sir, there is not, there never has been, and I do not believe there ever will be, a constitutional obligation imposed upon the citizens of the free States that they will not faithfully and honorably discharge. True, here and there the laws of the National as well as the State governments have been violated, but these are exceptions to the rule.

The laws of Congress and the decisions of the Supreme Court are, you know, Mr. Chairman, uniformly obeyed by the citizens of the entire North, and obeyed, too, even though they may, in accordance with their highest convictions of justice, regard some of them as infamous, as they undoubtedly do. Still the people of the northern States have submitted to them and prefer still to yield obedience to them until the people, in their majesty, shall demand, in a peaceful, and constitutional manner, their modification or repeal, and also the reversal, in a like peaceful and constitutional manner, of such decisions of the Supreme Court as they believe to be not only in violation of the plain provisions of the Constitution, but also inhuman, barbarous and unjust. All this the citizens of the free States have done and will continue to do, rather than resort to revolution and bloodshed, and the overthrow and destruction of this Government and Union, freighted as it is with the hopes of millions, and endeared to every patriot by the memories of the past and the hopes of the future. The northern States ever have and will continue to abide by the obligations of the national Constitution, whatever the South may do. The citizens of the free States have been taught to regard the Constitution as the sheet-anchor of their liberties, and they will not abandon it, much less trample upon its just requirements.

But the "Personal Liberty bills," as they are called, which some of the free States have felt themselves called on to pass to prevent kidnapping, are seized upon and used by the "crisis" manufacturers to inflame the southern mind against the North. Why has this matter never been thought of before, and brought to our notice? Some of these laws have been on the Statute books of the free States for over twenty years, and no complaint has been made until now.

Mr. Chairman. I can hardly find language with which properly to characterize this miserable pretext. It is one of the most flimsy shams ever resorted to by any set of men to hide their real designs. Why, sir, it is so contemptible that even South Carolina secessionists are too honorable to use it. In their convention her leading men do not attempt to justify their treason on such grounds, or because of the election of Mr. Lincoln, or the non-execution of the fugitive slave act. Indeed, on the seventh and eighth days of the sitting of the secession convention, in the course of the debate on the causes that induced South Carolina to take her present position, Mr. Packer said—

"It is no spasmodic effort that has come suddenly upon us, but it has been gradually culminating for a long series of years."

Mr. Inglis said: "Most of us have had this subject under consideration for the last twenty years."

Mr. Keitt said: "I have been engaged in this movement ever since I entered political life."

Mr. Rhett said: "It is nothing produced by Mr. Lincoln's election, or the non-execution of the fugitive slave law. It is a matter which has been gathering head for thirty years."

And before this, in their discussions, Messrs. Rhett, Spratt, and others declared their opinion that the *fugitive slave law is unconstitutional*. Judge Withers, in an able speech, said it was unconstitutional.

Mr. Keitt said: "I have great doubts myself about the fugitive slave law. The Constitution was at first a compact between the States; secondly, a treaty between sections. It was something more than a compact between the States. I believe, therefore, that this law ought to have been left to the execution of the various States."

But, Mr. Chairman, what are the "Personal Liberty bills" which some of the free States have passed? They are simply laws to prevent the kidnapping of their own citizens. They are just such laws in substance as may be found on the statute books of most of the southern States to prevent the kidnapping of their free and slave people.

I have looked over these acts of the free States on this subject, and find that they were not, as many suppose, passed expressly to obstruct the execution of any law of Congress. Many of these laws were passed to conform to the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of *Prigg vs. Pennsylvania*, which declared substantially that it was not the duty of a State to pass laws for the arrest and rendition of fugitive slaves, and that Congress alone had exclusive jurisdiction over the subject.

The law of Vermont provides that all officers of the United States and their deputies shall be exempt from the provisions of their "liberty bill" while in the dis-

charge of their official duty. The proviso reads as follows:

"This act, however, shall not be construed to extend to any citizen of the State acting as a Judge of the Circuit or District Court of the United States, or as a Marshal or Deputy Marshal of the district of Vermont, or to any person acting under the command or authority of said courts or marshal."

Nineteen twentieths of those who are prating about northern "Personal Liberty bills," know nothing about them. Nevertheless, they do not hesitate boldly to declare that they are unconstitutional.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I do not assume to speak for all the northern States; but I can say with great confidence, (and I have no doubt but what other gentlemen will speak for their States, and give the same pledge,) that if the Legislature of Ohio should at any time pass an unconstitutional law—which is not at all improbable, as their own local laws are frequently adjudged unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the State—I say, if such a law should at any time be passed, whether conflicting with the fugitive slave bill or any other act of Congress, it will be repealed whenever the Supreme Court declares it unconstitutional. Can the representatives from the States who complain of these "Personal Liberty bills" in fairness ask anything more? Are they willing, in turn, to give the North the same pledge of loyalty? Most of the States now in rebellion against the Government have, and have had for many years, laws on their statute books, the most inhuman, and, as we believe, unconstitutional—laws which enslave our free people, who are guilty of no crime, but are enslaved for life simply for coming into the State. The authorities of some of the free States have sent commissioners to one or more of these southern States, to test, in a legal and peaceful manner, the constitutionality of such laws; but they have not only never been permitted to do so, but gentlemen of its inclination, who have visited the southern States for that purpose, have been driven from the South by mobs. There never has been, and I think I may safely say there never will be, such an outrage committed by the citizens of any of the free States on a southern man whom a State might send north on such a mission. Any gentleman whom the authorities of a southern State may choose to commission to a free State, or who may come of his own will and pleasure, to test the constitutionality of any of our laws, whether they be our "Personal Liberty bills," or any others, will be received and treated as a gentleman. And the decision of our highest judicial tribunal, whether in accordance with our views or not, will be strictly and in good faith obeyed.

The Legislature of my State a few years ago passed a law, known with us as the crowlaw law, to tax banks the same as other property—a law which they not only believed to be just, but also constitutional. The banks resisted the payment of the tax. Suits were commenced to test its constitutionality. The Supreme Court of Ohio sustained the law, and declared it constitutional. It was carried to the Supreme Court of the United States, and they pronounced the law unconstitutional. The Legislature, in compliance with that decision, repealed the law, and appropriated money to refund to the banks the taxes thus declared to have been illegally collected. I mention this as one case that came within my own personal knowledge. I could name others, had I time, which would show the law-abiding and loyal character of the entire northern people. But it is not necessary. A majority of the people of Ohio believed then and believe now that that law was constitutional, and that the decision of the Supreme Court was wrong; yet they obeyed its mandates, because it was the court of last resort, and disobeying would be nullification.

Mr. Chairman, our calumniators in the North have deceived and are to-day deceiving the honest people of the South, as to the character and purpose of the masses of men who make up the Republican party. They are told that "the North had got to be utterly lost to all sense of truth or falsehood, right or wrong; that everything good gave way before senseless sympathy for black men to such a degree that to steal property, incite to insurrection, rapine, and murder, were every day sights." Sir, a more shameless falsehood never fell from the lips of man or devil. In the estimation of all honorable men, a wilful falsifier is of all men the most despicable, and the utterer of this base slander on his own State and neighbors has at last found the depth of infamy. There cannot be one fact adduced upon which to rest so monstrous a charge. There is no evidence of this alleged hatred on the part of the North. No southern man or woman visiting the North, either for business

or pleasure, were ever beaten with stripes, tarred and feathered, imprisoned, or murdered by any cowardly mobs or lynch law courts, no matter what their opinions might be on any subject, however obnoxious, or how ever offensively they might have proclaimed them. I wish as much could be said, and as truthfully, of every southern State.

Sir, I say to southern gentlemen, and I say it with pride, that a more law-abiding, peaceful, constitutional and union-loving people cannot be found in any part of the country than the great body of those who make up the rank and file of the Republican party. Indeed they are preeminently distinguished, wherever known, for the conscientious discharge of every duty, public and private, for their sobriety and Christian character, for their love of peace, for their unselfish philanthropy and a love of the human race, which is circumscribed by no narrow limits, but embraces in its cosmopolitan liberality the people of every nation and every religious creed.

If this be true, I am asked why we permit such slanderers as the author of the extract just read to utter their falsehoods throughout the North? I answer, because we are not fearful of falsehood, where free speech and a free press is left free to combat it before an intelligent people. Wherever such slanders are uttered in the North they are harmless. They ought to be and would be harmless with you in the South, if you tolerated free speech and a free press. The utterer of this slander is like the desperate gambler, who, having lost character, position, everything that a manly man could desire, is playing the last card upon the political board, with a recklessness befitting his desperate condition, hoping almost against hope to be promoted, by the dying political organization now in charge of the Government, to a position once dignified and made honorable by a Jay, a Story, and a Marshall. How infamous and wicked must an administration be where promotion to high and honorable positions are more readily secured by such baseness than by an honorable, manly, upright bearing.

John Randolph, of Virginia, once said, when rebuking those whom he justly called dough-faces, "that he did not envy the head or heart of that man who could rise here and defend slavery on principle." I would, sir, that we had a Randolph, a Jefferson, and a McDowell to speak here to-day, for the South and to the South.

Mr. Chairman. It is a mistake, and our southern brethren are deceived in supposing that opposition to slavery in the free States is the result of political preaching or political parties. It is a still greater mistake to suppose that this opposition has become so formidable as it has because of political demagogues seeking office. This sentiment of opposition to slavery has existed from the day the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth rock, and ever will exist, not only with their children but with the great body of the Christian world. It has grown in spite of political preaching, in spite of demagogues, and in spite of dough faces, of whom the North has, I am sorry to say, quite as many to-day, as when Randolph gave them a name so characteristic of their depravity.

In Canada, on our northern border, in England, and France and indeed throughout all Europe the hostility to slavery is far greater and more universal than in any of the free States of the American Union. And those who are its most uncompromising opponents in the countries named cannot and never expected to obtain office or political promotion because of their opposition to the system. They are not and never have been influenced by any such sordid considerations. Neither are the great body of the citizens of the free States, who are and always have been opposed to slavery governed in their opposition by any such considerations. It is a feeling of human nature which cannot be overcome, a "prejudice," if you will, which cannot be "conquered" at the bidding of any man or party.

Three-fourths of the civilized and Christian world look upon the trade of man-stealing and man selling as a piratical commerce, to be prohibited and abolished wherever governments have the power. And if there never had been any United States senators and representatives in Congress made elective by the people in the free States, and there were no offices to be filled there by appointment of the President of the United States, the hostility to this execrable commerce in the free States would have been five fold greater than it is. And without the aid which the North has given to the slavery interest, it would be powerless to-day. For the truth is, the National Government in the hands

of slaveholders, as it has been three-fourths of the time since its organization, has debauched and corrupted the public mind of the North, and in the name of democracy, has been able to keep possession of the Government, while extending, strengthening, and nationalizing slavery.

Mr. Chairman. Liberty is one of the grandest and most God-like aspirations of the human heart; it is a sentiment which cannot be eradicated by compromise or party platforms. No, nor by church creeds neither. It is a feeling implanted in the breast of every intelligent human soul by the hand of the creator, and bars and bolts and prisons cannot eradicate it. It is the morning and evening prayer of every slave, and the late Gov. McDowell, of Virginia, never uttered a more sublime truth than when he said: "You may place the slave where you please; you may dry up to your uttermost the fountains of his feeling; the springs of his thoughts; you may close upon his mind every avenue to knowledge, and cloud it over with artificial night; you may yoke him to labor as an ox which liveth only to work, and worketh only to live; you may put him under any process which, without destroying his value as a slave, will debase and crush him as a rational being; you may do all this, and the idea that HE WAS BORN FREE WILL SERVE IT ALL. It is allied to his hope of immortality: it is the eternal part of his nature, which oppression cannot reach. It is a torch lit up in his soul by the hand of Deity, and never meant to be extinguished by the hand of man."

Mr. Chairman. The people of the North hold these sentiments to-day, as they ever have and as I trust they ever will. What wonder, then, that when called upon to extend by their vote this institution, so obnoxious to them and the moral sense of the civilized world, that they should be found, as a body, in opposition to it. The only wonder, sir, is that there is any division in the free States on the subject. On this question a large majority of the citizens of all parties in the free States stand to-day where Washington and Adams, Jefferson and Franklin, Hancock and Jay stood in the days of the revolution, and where Clay and the leading men of all parties, political as well as religious, stood thirty and forty years ago.

When Henry Clay was called upon, in 1850, to vote to legalize slavery in the National Territories, he indignantly refused, and declared, in language which will live as long as any sentiment his great heart ever conceived, or his eloquent lips ever uttered, "that no earthly power could induce him to do it." I will quote the extract. In reply to Senator Davis, of Mississippi, he said—

"I am extremely sorry to hear the Senator from Mississippi say that he requires, first, the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, and, also, that he is not satisfied with that, but requires, if I understood him correctly, a positive provision for the admission of slavery south of that line. And now, sir, coming from a slave State, as I do, I owe it to myself, I owe it to truth, I owe it to the subject, to say that no earthly power could induce me to vote for a specific measure for the introduction of slavery where it had not before existed, either south or north of that line. Coming, as I do, from a slave State, it is my solemn, deliberate, and well matured determination that no power—no earthly power—shall compel me to vote for the positive introduction of slavery either south or north of that line. While you reproach, and justly, our British ancestors for the introduction of this institution upon the continent of North America, I am, for one, unwilling that the posterity of the present inhabitants of California and New Mexico shall reproach us for doing what we reproach Great Britain for doing for us."

Need any of the men of to-day in this House hesitate or fear to stand as firmly in opposition to the extension of slavery as the great Kentucky statesman stood only ten years ago?

To the same effect spoke the distinguished Senator from the slave State of Delaware, the late John M. Clayton. In a speech in the Senate of the United States, August 3, 1843, he said—

"Does any man expect that, from this time forth to the end of the republic, the North will ever again consent to extend slavery by act of Congress into any free territory, and thus increase that alleged inequality of representation in the other House, arising out of the enumeration of three-fifths of slaves in the apportionment of its members, which has ever been the foundation of their most bitter complaints? Try that question when you may in that House, an overwhelming major-

ity will ever appear against such an extension. I have never voted for such an act of Congress, because, in my deliberate opinion, it would be wrong, and never could be justified, except as a measure to be resorted to in an extreme case, involving the very existence of the Union.

"I am no advocate of slavery, or of its extension. Like my friend from Maryland, (Mr. Johnson,) I hold no slaves, and I fully concur in the opinion which he expressed a year ago, 'that slavery is a moral, social, and political evil—to be removed, however, only by those who are immediately interested in it.' These are the deliberate opinions of thousands and tens of thousands in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, and Kentucky—all slaveholding States. * * * Opinions go far beyond ours in the non-slaveholding States. They view slavery as an eradicable curse, and will never consent, in any event, to its extension, unless where the Constitution carries it.

"Sir, it is time the South understood her true position. She can no longer control this question. He who supposes that a threat of disunion will alarm the potent men of the North labors under a great mistake. To them disunion has no terrors."

Mr. Chairman, every concession made by the majority of any people in any government, to the minority, under menaces and threats, but emboldens and makes that minority more exacting and imperious in their demands. All past compromises, as they were called—concessions, as they were in fact—to the slave interest, prove the truth of this declaration. So domineering has this slave interest become, because of these concessions, that they now threaten the utter destruction of the Government unless every demand they make is immediately complied with. Indeed, it has been seriously intimated that the man selected by the people as their Chief Magistrate for the ensuing four years from the fourth of March will never be inaugurated in this capital; that the city of Washington will be in the hands of the traitors before that time, and the seat of government of the proposed Democratic slave empire. In answer to this, sir, I have just this to say: that in any event—yes, sir, in any event—Mr. Lincoln will be inaugurated President of the United States in this city, and that this capital, with all its magnificent structures and its venerable traditions, will remain the seat of government of this Republic; I mean, sir, that it will remain the seat of government of those loyal States who, come what may, with patriotic fidelity will remain true to the old Constitution, and faithfully adhere to the principles upon which the government was founded. The eighteen millions of freemen in the North will never allow it to be otherwise. Should the conspirators, however, ever succeed—which is hardly within the range of human probability—in establishing their proposed slave empire, Washington City will never be its capital. So long, sir, as it shall remain a capital at all, the banner of liberty, with its stars and stripes, shall float from its dome, or none—the black banner of slavery and disunion, never!

Mr. Chairman, our duty, as the representatives of the people, is to meet like men this oft-recurring and exciting question which is again presented for our consideration. Not selfishly, as maintaining consistency; not hastily, through fear: not in anger, or red-hot wrath; but calmly, firmly, courteously, in view of the great responsibility resting upon each member, and the momentous consequences that may follow the casting of a single vote.

Sir, I would not knowingly or willingly do or say one word that would have a tendency to light up the torch of civil and servile war, for I feel that the two will be inseparable—that the one cannot come without the other; and I pray Heaven that such a calamity may not only be spared my own kindred, but the people of every southern State. I am for peace; the great body of the citizens with whom it is my pride and pleasure to act are for peace—they are men of peace. And no language that I can command will more forcibly express the sentiments of the entire constituency whom I have the honor to represent than the following lines from our own Quaker poet, John G. Whittier. They were written a short time after the John Brown raid at Harper's Ferry. His execution was the occasion which called them forth. I endorse every line and every thought, and apply them to-day—as he then applied them to Virginia—to all the southern States, so far as interfering in any unlawful manner with their local affairs.

"Perish with him the folly
That seeks through evil good,
Long live the generous purpose
Unstained with human blood!
Not the raid of midnight terror,
But the thought which underlies;
Not the outlaw's pride of daring
But the Christian's sacrifice.

"Oh! never may yon blue-ridged hills
The northern rife hear,
Nor see the light of blazing homes
Flash on the negro's spear.
But let the free-winged angel Truth
Their guarded passes scale,
To teach that right is more than might
And justice more than mail!

"So vainly shall Virginia set
Her battle in array;
In vain her trampling squadrons knead
The winter snow with clay.
She may strike the poouncing eagle
But she dare not harm the dove;
And every gate she bars to Hate
Shall open wide to Love!"

Mr. Chairman, we should have had peace if we had had an Executive with firmness and courage, one who at a proper time would have driven traitors from his Cabinet, and called to his councils Union loving and patriotic men, instead of entering into secret negotiations with the conspirators.

Sir, one of the most melancholy spectacles this generation has been called to witness, and, I may add, one of the most melancholy I hope they may ever live to witness, has been the utter failure of James Buchanan to administer this Government. Called to the Chief Magistracy by the voice of a generous and confiding people, he found the nation in a state of prosperity which it had never known, with an overflowing Treasury, and a large majority of his political friends in both houses of Congress. He is now to retire from the position to which, in an evil hour, he was unfortunately elevated, utterly disgraced. His party defeated, the Treasury bankrupt, the business of the country prostrate, and the whole nation convulsed by the action of a band of conspirators who, if not with his complicity, with the complicity, at least, of a majority of his late Cabinet, were attempting, and to-day are determined, if possible, to destroy the Government, which he and they had alike sworn to maintain and defend.

He has failed as no President has ever failed before him, and failed only because destitute of that firmness and moral integrity necessary, (when surrounded as he has been, by the most unscrupulous,) to discharge the plain and unmistakable duties imposed upon him by the Constitution. His vacillation and want of courage has driven the country from a state of unexampled prosperity and peace to the very brink of ruin and civil war, and we are to-day in a condition that no other nation with such an Executive head could be in for a single hour without revolution. Our only hope is in the loyalty and patriotism of the people. This, I trust, will enable us to withstand the storm until the fourth of March, when the Government will, I am sure, pass into other and better hands.

With the retirement of Mr. Buchanan, we have also the destruction of the political organization of which, for so many years, he has been a leader. This party, claiming to be Democratic, has been one of the most wonderful organizations known in the history of this or any other country having a popular form of government. Professing the broadest liberalism, the greatest veneration for constitutional liberty, and assuming to recognize to the fullest extent the binding obligations of all compacts and compromises, as well as a most sacred regard for the rights of all men, its leaders have not scrupled to apologise for the vilest despotism, nor hesitated to trample upon the Constitution as upon all compacts and compromises, and every right of human nature. They have not hesitated, until the break up at Charleston and Baltimore, at supporting any and every demand, however monstrous, when made by the slave interest. In past years the resources of this wonderful party seemed inexhaustible and its power invincible. No matter what its leader said or did, the party was successful. It defied and in turn prostrated all parties which contested its claims for power, and in its triumphal march all opposition and combinations fell before it as by the hand of magic. So blinded were the people by

its fair promises and captivating name. But to-day, thanks to a free press and free speech, all this is changed, and its prestige is gone, its glory has departed, its hold upon the heart of the people is broken, and the sceptre of power is about to pass from its hands into those of a young and generous party, representing the republican principles of Jefferson.

Mr. Chairman. There are thirty millions of people in this country; of this number twenty-five millions, at least, are opposed to the extension of slavery into any national Territory, and would never vote at the ballot box to sanction such a proposition, much less agree to give it additional guarantees, and make it perpetual by an amendment to the Constitution. This immense moral power, with all the civilized and Christian world to sympathize with it, wielded peacefully and constitutionally, as I trust it ever will be against slavery, cannot fail eventually to put it in the course of ultimate extinction, and ere long the citizens of the slave States, in their own way, will put away this evil and wrong from among them. This is the faith and hope of the Republican party, and, as I have said before, I will keep this faith or none.

If, however, civil war is forced upon the nation for the purpose of extending and making slavery perpetual, he must indeed be blind who does not see that the system will go out in blood. Twenty-five millions of people who not only have no interest in slavery, but whose pecuniary interests are against it, as well as their political and religious views, will never submit to the dictation of a privileged class numbering less than half a million. May God in his mercy avert the catastrophe of civil and servile war. But if it must come, I pray that the doom of slavery, which will be inevitable, may not also prove the doom of the slave masters; that we may not see re-enacted in any part of our country the bloody horrors of St. Domingo; for, as Jefferson said, "the Almighty has no attributes that can take sides with the slave masters in such a contest."

Mr. Chairman. If it were possible for the people of the United States to permit the Union to be dissolved and allow a southern confederacy to be formed, it would be a confederated despotism more intolerant than any government of the nineteenth century. Those who have heretofore been the boasted champions of what they have been pleased to call Democracy, do not hesitate now to declare, in case of the establishment of a southern confederacy that everything like Democracy is to be ignored. Popular government is a failure! exclaim the leaders of this southern revolution, who, until now, have been loudest in declaiming for the sovereignty of the people. Popular government is a failure respond the united disunion Democracy. Popular government is a failure is echoed back by many of the so-called conservatives, who a few months ago were clamorous for "the preservation of the Union and the enforcement of the laws." Popular government is a failure say the slave masters, who are attempting to establish a slave empire, and who insist that a government must be established which shall prohibit free speech and a free press, for with them these are also a failure. Popular government is a failure shout this band of conspirators of all former political parties and all religious creeds, who unite in demanding that a strong military government shall be established excluding all from a voice in its deliberations who have not a pecuniary interest in maintaining the institution of slavery.

They desire a government in which the slave masters shall govern as the Bourbons in Europe claimed to have governed, by the grace of God, and that the poor whites shall submit. And, as I said in some remark which I made upon this subject at the last session, this despotism will have to be resisted, "or the poor whites of the South will first be disfranchised, then classed socially as they are to day, to a great extent, with the servile race, and at last they and their children will be melted down in the slave population forever." The men who are seeking the destruction of this Union and the establishment of such a government are the identical men who for the past twenty-five years have dictated the policy, controlled the political action of all their conventions, and finally destroyed the old Democratic party in all the free States. What wonder that the northern wing of this old party should have been repudiated by the people, when their leaders surrendered to the demands of this slave interest, and while professing Democracy, abandon the principles of Jefferson and joined in an effort to make this a slave empire.

Thomas S. Grimké, of South Carolina, one of the

noblest and truest of men, in a speech of great power and eloquence, while denouncing the nullification movement of Calhoun in 1833, referred to the certainty of slave insurrections, as also the ultimate loss of liberty to the poor whites in case of civil war, which he regarded as certain to follow an attempt to enforce the doctrines of nullification. He said—

"These insurrections would be followed by depreciation of property, not only in negroes, but of all kinds of wealth, and at the same time the necessities of war would require an amount of taxation that could be enforced only by a military government, under which even the liberties of the whites would soon perish."

If there is disunion and civil war, it will be no fault of the northern people. If there should be servile insurrections, the people of the free States cannot be justly charged with inciting it. It will be the fault of the very men who, in their madness to sustain slavery, have inflamed not only the minds of the whites, but of the slave population also.

A traveler returning to France under the reign of Louis XVIII, after an absence of many years, was asked what changes he found. "Nothing," he answered "save that the people are now saying in the streets what was formerly only said at the dinner tables and in the drawing rooms of the leading men in Paris."

The traveler was right. "The idea of liberty had gone down to the people. Philosophy in a deep and thrilling voice had told the injured of their rights as men: it had reminded them of their many galling wrongs. Habit still made them suffer in silence, but the seeds of future vengeance were sown." That vengeance was the French revolution.

The slaves in the South, waiting upon their masters at the dinner tables, at all political meetings, indeed everywhere, hear the Republican party denounced and Mr. Lincoln called their friend. They hear their masters declare that he is to liberate them by force if necessary, and place them on a social and political equality with the whites. The slave catches up their thoughts; vague notions of freedom take possession of him; he meditates upon it; he communicates it from cabin to cabin, from plantation to plantation, and thus are the seeds of insurrections sown by the slave masters, and insurrections in time are sure to follow, whether the South are in or out of the Union.

But, Mr. Chairman, I am asked how I propose to adjust our present difficulties. I answer, by accommodating ourselves to the logic of events; by yielding to that which is inevitable, and obeying the deliberately-expressed will of the nation. The people of the United States are not only tired, but disgusted with these everlasting diplomatic tricks called "compromises," patched up by slaveholders and political quacks on the one side, and commercial timidity and northern flunkeyism on the other. We have had enough of these crafty tricks, which have decided nothing; which, instead of settling the difficulty, has postponed but to aggravate it, leaving the ever-recurring dispute to be again "settled" by the next generation. The difficulties that environ us to-day are as well understood as they can be after another contest of twenty-five years. The truth is, slavery is gasping for breath; it is struggling for a new lease of life; it demands guarantees that shall make the lease perpetual, but if you will not give that, it will "compromise" with less. But whether you accede to its demands or not, the logic of events tells me unmistakably that slavery must die. The judgment of the civilized and Christian world decrees it. Emancipation is the sentiment of all nations, and we cannot resist it if we would, and ought not to do it if we could. What the people of this country want, what they expect and demand at our hands, is not new truces with slavery, but a permanent settlement of this question in the only way it ever can be settled to give peace and contentment to the country, and that is, to settle it, wherever the national jurisdiction extends, by the just rule of right and liberty.

Shall we meet and solve this problem like men, fairly, honorably, and without dissimulation, and as the better promptings of our hearts dictate; or shall we skulk and dodge like the tricksters of an hour? Shall we meet the question like statesmen, legislating for the generations to come as well as our own, or shall we shift the responsibility, with all its accumulated complications, upon those who must succeed us?

Mr. Chairman, the people of the United States have been earnestly struggling, in one form or another, with this giant evil of slavery for nearly half a century; and though often betrayed by their leaders into what were called "compromises," the faith of the masses have remained unshaken, and they have continued hopeful.

Though often defeated in their political struggles for obtaining possession of the government, they have always been loyal, and never threatened or attempted rebellion or revolution. This struggle between the people on the one side, and a privileged class on the other, has been such a struggle as the world has never witnessed, because it has been conducted peacefully and lawfully. No war, no desolated homes, no hatred, but a generous, noble, self-sacrificing struggle, that must challenge the admiration of the world, accomplished as it has been, by peaceful citizens, in the mode and manner prescribed by the Constitution, by the silent but all potent power of the ballot. No man could have been a disinterested witness to this grand struggle, and beheld its first triumph without feeling that "peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." With the old watchword of "Freedom and Peace," we have conquered, and to day the liberty-loving men of all nations join in hailing with pride the advancing chief, the chosen of the people. The consequences of this peaceful victory no man can foresee. The effect of its example on the nations will be incalculable, even though we should have some trouble with those who are seeking to destroy the Government because they cannot longer administer it. It will restate us where we were in the days of Washington, in the respect and affections of the people of Europe, and the American Government, if true to the ideas upon which the triumph of which I am speaking has been achieved, will from this time forward hold the first position among the powers of the earth, and as a nation and people, we shall, as we ought, hold the first place in history for many generations to come. If, however, we should fail, from any cause, to carry out in good faith, this grand decree of the people; if through fear deceptive compromises are forced upon us, and the people are again betrayed under the pretense of appeasing those whose whole history gives us the assurance that they will be satisfied with nothing short of having slavery recognized as property by constitutional provision, those who aid in accomplishing this great wrong will deserve, as they will receive, the condemnation of all liberty-loving men.

But I am told that the people demand that such concessions and compromises shall be granted. Sir, I deny it. I have seen no evidence of it and do not believe it. I grant you, sir, that there are some who demand it; the leaders of the party which have just been driven from power by an indignant people, demand it, and are supported in their imperious demands by almost the entire slave interest of the country; but the great body of the people, the millions not only do not demand it, but I tell you, sir, that they will never tolerate it. Sir, I should be loth to believe that those who, through so many long and weary years, have struggled hopefully on arid disasters and defeats, the desertions of pretended friends and false leaders, could, in the hour of their triumph, advise a surrender to the minority, and consent to abandon that cause which alone made success in the late campaign possible. I cannot believe that the people, under the menace of disunion and revolution, will ever take a step backward, that they will, in a cowardly manner, give up every principle for which they have been so heroically battling for years. No, no; this grand array of millions which has withstood so many defeats while battling for the right, will march on and march on under the banner of "Peace," conquering and to conquer. No earthly power can stay it. In its triumphal progress it will know no barrier but justice, no restraint but the just restraints of the Constitution. Missouri compromises and all other compromise lines which you may establish in your party efforts to secure new guarantees to slavery, will be like the baseless fabric of a vision before its advancing tread. This Government was not organized for the purpose of making slavery universal and perpetual; but to "establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

This was the cherished purpose of the fathers when they launched this great ship of state, the Constitution, upon the yet troubled waters which were crimsoned

with the blood of the Revolution. They firmly believed that she would weather every storm. In this faith they laid them down to rest, and committed to those who should come after them its direction and government. Shall we, their sons, falter and desert her now, when storms and tempests beat against her, or shall we, like true mariners, stand firmly at the post of duty and danger? Shall we, with the very dawn of the morning beaming upon us, give up all, and, without a struggle, let the tempest and darkness close around her and engulf all in one common ruin? or shall we cling to the good old ship, and put a new commander upon her deck, who will go back to the old chart, put her head to the storm, and man her with freemen instead of slaves?

Mr. Chairman, to a patriot and lover of his country there would seem to be but one course. The voices of the people echo but one cry, but one command, and that is: "Save the good ship Constitution from her present peril!" If we fail to do this we are not the men for the hour. If need be, party ties must be severed and party divisions forgotten; sectional animosities must cease, and a union of all freedom-loving men secured for the sake of liberty and the Union. If, while the coming dawn foreshadows the deliverance of all nations and the freedom of every race, we alone are found destroying the most perfect form of government ever given to man, in a struggle to make slavery perpetual, of all men we will be the most guilty. Shall history record this, the darkest of crimes, against our names? Shall our children execrate our memories because we were traitors and cowards, and, for an hour of promised peace and commercial prosperity, consented to our own and their degradation and the endless bondage of millions? Shall it be said that while thrones throughout Europe are falling, and long-oppressed races are everywhere claiming and asserting their God-given rights; while a free press is proclaiming that this is the golden age of justice that precedes the year of a universal jubilee, when the people of all nations will be marching to the joyful sound of liberty and independence—shall it be said of us, I say, that, under our direction, the Republic established by Washington, alone is relapsing into despotism? At a time when the sons of struggling humanity are loosing the bonds which have bound them for ages, and, in obedience to the Divine command, are "permitting the oppressed to go free," shall the freemen of this country consent to rivet the chains of the slave, and thus aid those who are seeking permanently to establish and extend this despotism throughout all the free Territories of the nation?

While Italy, after a struggle of centuries, under the guidance of her brave Garibaldi, (who is to Italy to day what Washington was to us,) is marching in unity to secure the enjoyment of constitutional liberty, and Hungary and Germany are keeping step to the universal march of nations, while Russia is emancipating her millions of slaves, and all peoples, under every form of government, are advancing toward the dawn of that civilization which liberty always brings, shall the people of the United States, who have the grandest government committed to their keeping which the world has ever seen, alone be found struggling to make the rule of slavery universal? Can an American representative in such an hour as this, either from motives of personal ambition or sordid pecuniary interest, consent to foster strife, division, and discord, and without hesitancy or remorse give his vote to drive back both citizens and Government toward the night of despotism and barbarism?

God grant, sir, that every representative may pause and consider well the momentous consequences of every vote he may be called upon to cast before giving it in favor of any of the numerous compromise schemes and proposed constitutional amendments which are sought to be forced upon us, and which, if adopted, will be but another step, as far as the action of this body can decree it, toward making slavery constitutional and perpetual in this land of liberty.



